TSR RPGA

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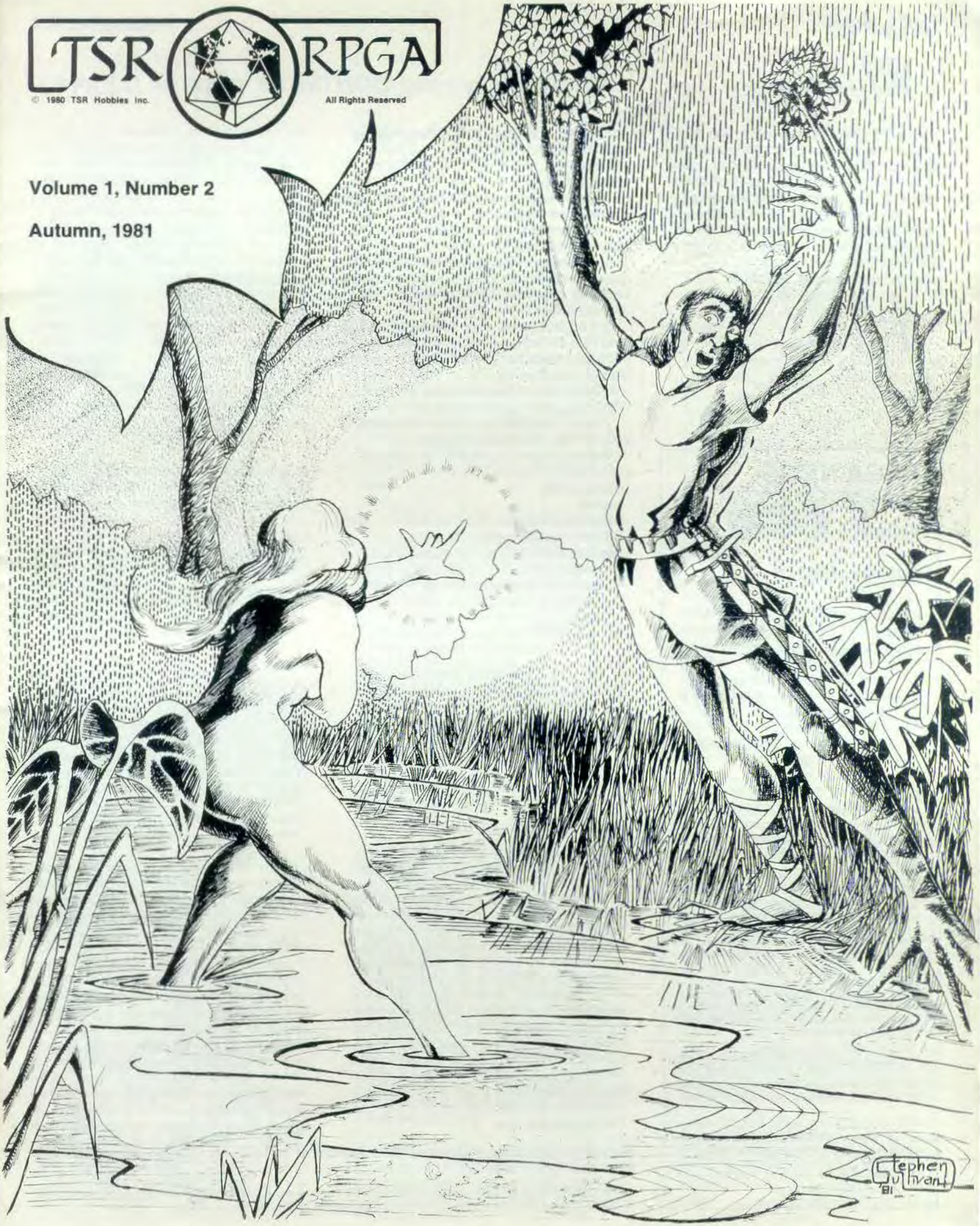

Quality!

Quality seems to be what you want ...so we've continued. Your response has been great enough to continue many features and add new ones. PLEASE respond to our requests for information —in this issue, check the Gift Catalog and Spelling Bee. Rocksnoz continues, and a map of the infamous land of Nidd is in the works.

Like I said: COMMUNICATE!

Frank Mentzer

RPGA NEWS

Volume I, Number 2

Autumn, 1981

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LETTERS

"Do you have some names and addresses of D&D players in Holland? It's quite boring to play the whole time with the same people 'cause you almost can guess what they're gonna do.

"Signed: The Only Known DM in Holland."

If any readers would like to respond, write to us; we'll let this DM know who you are.

"Do the published prices apply to members overseas? Can I get DRAGON magazine for only $20?" — GU, Sweden

RPGA memberships are available at the published prices wherever you may live; this may change in the future, as we get bigger. However, the magazine subscription does cost a bit more; as we've said, you still get a $4 discount by being a new RPGA member. Current rates for anywhere outside of North America (which includes Canada and Mexico) are $50 for surface mail, $95 airmail. Expensive? Sure; but that's the cost of the mail itself driving the cost up. Note that overseas-based servicepersons with APO and FPO addresses are considered as USA, for the normal low rate.

"The Grenadier Strasse Kriegspiel Society will hold its second annual Mannheimer-Con Wargame Convention on February 12-15, 1982 at the Mannheim Middle School in Mannheim, West Germany. Role playing games included, plus contests, seminars, vendors, and more. For more information, please write to the Society at 181st Trans Bn, APO New York 09166."

And mention our name.

"I recently saw an ad for the Mattel Electronics® DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ Computer Labyrinth Game. Could you give me some information about it?" — TC, New York

Well, I like it. Prices vary, but it usually runs from $40-$60. Your character moves out from a 'home base' up to a maximum movement, stopping when you run into an invisible wall; gradually you find the walls of the invisible maze. If you get close to the hidden treasure, the dragon wakes up and chases you until you get 'home' again; thereafter you have to be very careful to avoid it — not knowing exactly where it, or the treasure, is, in most cases. It sounds simple, but it can

(cont. on p. 14)

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OFFICIAL NOTICE

Many of you have already taken advantage of the special discount subscription offer from DRAGON magazine. If you haven't, now is the time to do it — and here's why.

As a "new member", you are eligible for the lower rate. But at what point does a five-year member graduate from the "new member" category? And there's a loophole: a one-year member could let the RPGA membership lapse, then renew a week later — thus again becoming a "new member" and getting another discount to his or her DRAGON magazine subscription.

Needless to say, this was not the intent of the offer. As a matter of fact, it costs a little extra RPGA money, along with the $20 you send in, to get this offer for members. THEREFORE:

New RPGA members may subscribe to DRAGON magazine at a discount — $20 per year — subject to the following restrictions:

1. The subscription MUST be ordered within 60 days of the day your application is reviewed by RPGA HQ to receive the discount rate.
2. This offer is only available once per person.
3. This policy is effective immediately.

Now, don't scream if you haven't taken advantage of this offer, and now seem to be cut off; all RPGA members have until January 31, 1982 to take advantage of it. To do so, send a note with your name and membership number, along with your Visa or Mastercard number or check or money order PAYABLE TO RPGA (NOT DRAGON magazine — repeat, RPGA!) to:

RPGA HQ
POB 97809
Chicago, IL
60690

Thanks for your understanding and cooperation, and remember —

LAST CHANCE: by January 31, 1982

DISPEL CONFUSION

by The Game Wizards

This column will contain OFFICIAL answers to your AD&D rules questions. Experts from TSR Hobbies, Inc. are consulted, providing the answers to questions from YOU. In the last issue, we dealt with some very general questions; this time, we're a lot more specific.

Ever wonder how long paralysis lasts? Or whether Strength bonuses apply to certain missiles? The answers to these and other questions have been provided by the Grand Master of Dragons himself: E. Gary Gygax.

That's right; these answers are from Gary. So get out your pens and note the details right in your books; or clip this page (as well as the other DISPEL CONFUSION columns) and keep them with your other AD&D materials.

Please send all questions about rules for ANY of TSR's role playing games to DISPEL CONFUSION, care of this newsletter.

Q: Do Strength bonuses apply when using vorpal or sharpness swords? The DMG seems to suggest that they don't.

A: NO, they do not, for purposes of determining the special effects of each. The magic which gives them their special powers cannot be affected by strength or magical bonuses, other than that contained in the sword itself. HOWEVER, if the roll is low enough NOT to trigger the special function, then all other bonuses are added to determine "to hit" and damage.

Q: Would an Amulet of Life Protection guard against "The Void" in a Deck of Many Things?

A: NO. The power of the Deck far exceeds that of the Amulet. The Void would do two things: Place the psyche into the Amulet normally, and then place the Amulet on "a far planet or plane" (as per DMG).

Q: How long does (or should) paralysis caused by a carrion crawler last? And what, if any, are the effects of multiple hits by this creature?

A: Paralysis from creatures lasts as long as paralysis from a wand: 5d4 (5-20) rounds (DMG page 136). Multiple hits from a carrion crawler (or any other paralyzing creature) forces multiple saving throws on the part of the victim; when any one is failed, the other hits have no further effect on the paralysis (damages still apply if given, such as by a ghoul or ghast).

Q: Can a creature with a gaze weapon attack more than one target per round? Is it possible to use both the gaze weapon and natural or melee weapons in the same round?

A: A gaze weapon will only affect one victim per round, but this attack form is in addition to any other attacks given; a basilisk, for example, can gaze and then bite in the same round.

Q: If a character using a weapon requiring 3' (or more) of space is standing next to other characters using weapons requiring the same amount of space, how many may occupy a 10' wide hallway and still attack at no penalty?

A: Only two. Remember that human-sized characters occupy about 3' of space themselves, plus the given amounts of space for using the weapons.

Q: In TSR's D&D module B2, several monsters are equipped with Amulets of Protection from Good, which cause them to be treated as Undead of the next higher type. Would the reverse of the first level clerical spell Protection From Evil enable Undead to perform in a similar manner?

A: The Amulets in question are magic items, created by a difficult and expensive process. The spell would NOT have the same effect, and wearing more than one Amulet will have the same effect as wearing more than one Ring of Protection (only one will apply).

Q: Can something which may only be struck by silver or +1 or better weapons be affected by non-magical area affects, such as fire, gas, acid, and the like? Furthermore, would a magical attack without "plusses" (such as Fireball, Lightning Bolt, or Stinking Cloud) affect such a creature? Are they immune to gaze attacks?

A: Read the description literally; they are affected by those WEAPONS only, but the restriction does not apply to other attack forms. Unless specified otherwise, the other attack forms will do normal damage. Magical attacks will affect the victim normally, including gaze weapons.

Q: Do Strength bonuses apply to hand-hurled missiles? And are the Strength bonuses cumulative with Dexterity bonuses to hit?

A: The bonuses do apply, at any range, and are cumulative.

RPGA INTERVIEW with...

E. GARY GYGAX

We present the conclusion of our April interview with E. Gary Gygax, President of TSR Hobbies, Inc. and inventor of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® fantasy role playing game. The interview series will continue in the next newsletter; if there's someone you'd like to hear from, let us know!

RPGA: In looking over what little I could find from the past on the origins of the *D&D* game and its development, I ran across a mention from you that some of your associates at TSR were somewhat concerned about getting so far away from wargaming, and going so heavily into role playing gaming. Are there any plans for the future of getting away from role playing, and getting back into wargames - to *any* extent?

EGG: I don't think that we want to do that directly. Role playing has a broader appeal than wargames; there's just no help for it. Wargames usually demand more specific knowledge at the onset than do role playing games. You can start role playing in a period you know virtually nothing about. Hopefully, the game itself will generate sufficient interest to make you want to learn. But I don't believe that wargames, historical simulations, and the like will ever have the level of popularity that role playing does. So, while we're interested in doing good battle games and conflict simulations, our company will never become primarily an historical game company.

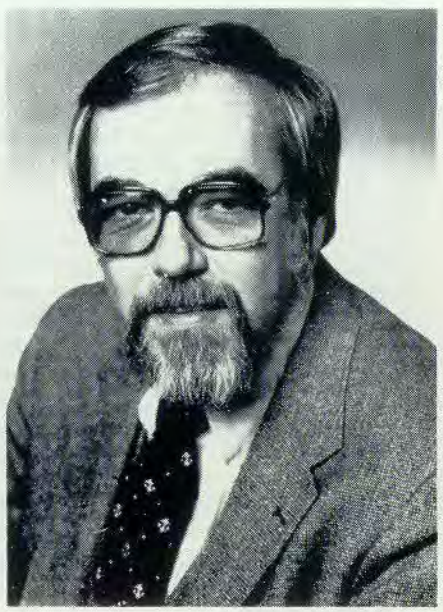
RPGA: One seemingly notable lack of TSR's products is figures, figures used in virtually every role playing game and of course through the wargamers. Why TSR *doesn't* make figures is almost irrelevant; but are there plans to do so?

EGG: Well, right now we license two firms to make figures for us, of various sorts: Grenadier Models and Miniature Figurines, Ltd. We have no immediate plans to begin manufacturing figures on our own. It might be in the cards in the not too distant future, but again perhaps not. It is a difficult area to get into, because of a great amount of expertise required to make little figures.

RPGA: We have received a lot of requests and questions about what has happened to T2 *(AD&D™ Dungeon Module T2: The Temple of Elemental Evil).* Is it soon to come?

EGG: It's about half finished, and I've done a complete revision of the old "Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth" (*AD&D Dungeon Module S5*), which were played at a Detroit WinterCon - oh, I don't know, three, four, five years ago, whenever it was -and I've finally gotten around to adding these, and putting a complete outdoor adventure on the front end to get to the Lost Caverns, and I'll finish those and then I'll get back into T2, and then do the plane modules I want to do. I want to do the elemental planes, para-elemental planes, demi-planes, and semi-planes, and demi-semi-planes, et cetera....

RPGA: Et cetera.... Well, as president of a multi-million dollar international corporation like TSR Hobbies, I'm sure you have very little free time; but is the Greyhawk campaign still running?



EGG: It runs sporadically, with basically what you'd call a group of new players - some of my younger children play, and some of their friends and associates. Occasionally we'll get some of the old-timers in there. As I got busier and busier, and the demands of work kept me from playing Greyhawk, I began to merge my profession with my avocation, and cheated a lot by creating the village of Hommlet and the temple of Elemental Evil to test some ideas I had about random dungeons, and outdoor terrain so forth. That got going with a number of the old original players, like Ernie and Brian and so forth, and now that that's pretty well quieted down, the old original Greyhawk is back in play again, now and again. One of these days I swear I'll extensively revise it, fill in a lot of the areas that I only have one-liner notes on, and maybe even attempt to publish it.

RPGA: Do you play any other games in your spare time?

EGG: You mean other than, like, the heroes and villains game that I play now, or Pit, such as at the convention *(Spring Revel)*, or Rail Baron? Yeah, I play backgammon, and chess, and Shogi; I'm a game player, I'm sure. Whenever I have time, I try to slip in a game I play with my youngest son. We play the electronic game of Generals, occasionally, or Go-ban, or - yeah, whatever's going, I'll take a shot at.

RPGA: You have mentioned communication among gamers being helped by Gen Con events, and also clubs and things like that. What else is being done for communications and clubs and the hobby as a whole?

EGG: Well, that's why the RPGA network is so desirable. An interchange of ideas and a communications network is necessary amongst role playing game en-

thusiasts in order that they don't go off in tangents, or that they don't become isolated and lose touch and kind of lose interest in the whole hobby. It's active and growing, and we need communications, we need information: a free exchange of ideas, a training ground, maybe, or at least an education ground for Dungeon Masters and would-be Dungeon Masters, or game masters in general. And also perhaps some means of bringing the play of each type of role playing game into a more standard - I can't say *method*; to define the parameters of play a little bit more. So that if you go from group to group, whether it's locally or in other regions, that the games will resemble each other. The bigger the audience for a game, the greater the oportunity to excel and to the enjoy the game.

For example, imagine trying to have a golf tournament if the rules for golf differed from state to state or golf course to golf course. In one, you could pick up the ball and throw it if you desired, in a given situation, rather than hitting it with a club. Or somewhere, the green wouldn't have to be closely manicured, or if the cup that you were shooting for could be a foot in diameter, or not much bigger than the golf ball, and so forth... it would be CHAOS. As it is, the rules for golf are pretty well set by the PGA structure, and you have interesting competitions and a large following, and lots of fun. I think the RPGA structure, in this case, will help to stabilize and bring a little more... a little higher quality of game play to our hobby. Hopefully it will also be a vehicle by which we can begin to reward players who really play well, and want to excel in tournaments, want to be rated, by giving them chances to go to various parts of our country, or overseas, perhaps, to play others. The UK branch of TSR has its own organization which is called - what are they called?

RPGA: The *D&D Players Association*, and more about that later in this issue.

EGG: Okay. So perhaps we can have an exchange. One year they'll be able to send somebody over here, or a team over here, or whatever it is, and the next year we can send a team over to the UK to play. There are lots of interesting possibilities with this thing. We'll also hopefully not

only spread the hobby and make it a little easier for enthusiasts to find more and better opponents or associates in a lot of games, but also to air their opinions and make the games better. If enough of the members feel that some game could be improved by some rules change, or addition or deletion or whatever it is, we'll certainly give that a lot of weight in what we do, because they're active, and the most informed segment of the hobby. So that's for certain.

RPGA: With a gamers' organization as important as the RPGA network, why not get an old-time gamer to run it?

EGG: What we wanted to do - and we did look at some old-time gamers, too - is to get someone who's interested and excited, and has lots of energy, who can get their ducks in a row, and who can create a synergism. Somebody who's going to approach it with a great amount of energy and creativity. And we also like to offer a chance to get involved for everybody. Y'know, it's not just the old-timers; it's a growing hobby.

RPGA: To jump ahead to the present and the future a bit: What have you done since the *D&D* game, Gary?

EGG: Rested on my laurels *(sighs)*.

RPGA: We're all familiar with the many modules you've come out with, but do you have any plans for any more role playing games? Or any other major products of this type?

EGG: Well, after the *Dungeons & Dragons* game was done, Brian and I worked on a game called Warriors of Mars, which is now out of print. I did Classic Warfare, Swords & Spells... What else? The *Boot Hill*™ game, with Brian. Let's see, what else have I worked with? Not much else beside that, other than modules and the *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* game.

RPGA: A monumental task in itself. Do you have plans for anything, or germs of ideas for the future?

EGG: Yeah, we have some pretty germy ideas here (smiles). Well, yeah, I'm working on a game with Brian right now. In fact, as I'm talking, I'm shuffling through cards, as you can see... and it is yet another game, which is different from any. It's a rather simple but fun card game.

I was thinking about the *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* game, and how I should have done characteristics - and it's different from the way I handled it. If I ever do another role playing game - and I've thought about it - there will be a slightly different character generation, and a slightly different list of abilities, shall we say. A different but similar method of character generation, and so on. So, yeah, I've thought about it; I haven't opted for anything.

RPGA: We'll look forward, of course, to anything you produce in the future, but -

EGG: You'll have to look quite a way forward.

RPGA: There has been a rumor that a *D&D* movie is to come. It would seem a natural development. What's going on?

EGG: We have been dealing for almost two years, off and on, with the entertainment media industry, regarding some sort of a D&D production. Whether it would be a television movie or a feature film was first debated; whether an independent producer would do it or a major studio was then covered. We fi-finally began serious negotiations something over a year ago with Twentieth Century Fox films, to do a major motion picture based on the *Dungeons & Dragons* game. After considerable negotiations, TSR has broken off further discussion because we felt that we wouldn't maintain sufficient control to assure a film which was true to the game. And we didn't want to end up with the rather disasterous type of movie that Tolkien's ring trilogy ended up with - something that was totally unsatisfactory for both those who had no idea what the Lord of the Rings was

all about, and to those who were aficionados of it. Spell that right!

RPGA: Well, thank you. To wrap up somewhat, what's ahead for TSR? Are there more *D&D* products coming out?

EGG: Let me speak just a little further, there....

RPGA: Oh... sure; sorry.

EGG: We have not *totally* dismissed the idea of doing a full-length feature film based on the *Dungeons & Dragons* game - with imagination, and creativity, and excitement, and adventure, and not some sort of a Hollywood epic which takes the name and then perverts everything else.

What's happening with the *Dungeons & Dragons* games? They are going to be expanded by the *D&D Companion Set*, which is a pickup of the three supplements to the original game - Greyhawk, Blackmoor, and Eldritch Wizardry - revised, expanded, edited, and improved, to be 99 and 44/100 per cent pure. With regard to *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* works, we have the *Fiend Folio*™ book coming out fairly soon, and then - I hope next year - a third book of monsters. Perhaps there can be some editing and expansion of the game to include new spells, new magic items, for *Advanced D&D* games.

I mentioned earlier a new way to generate characters. I've even thought about that, but I don't want to go back and try to change that system, because it's not really necessary; it works very well as it is now. I'm not going to get involved in any more changes than are absolutely necessary to make the game more playable; I don't think there *are* many things to make it more playable. More detailed combat systems tend to drag the game out, rather than speed it up.

The fun of an adventure is *the adventure*; it's not the bookkeeping, or hits, parries, and so forth, or getting more realism into a *fantasy* game *(sighs)*. I'm not sure what else is in the cards with respect to *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* games; I think that'll come as it comes. We're certainly going to have lots more modules and playing aids for both systems.

RPGA: Well, we'll all be looking forward to them.

EGG: Well, I *hope* so... (chuckles) Buy them now! Now's your chance to take advance orders. Send your contributions to....

NOTES FROM OVERSEAS

The RPGA Network is not just a big club in the United States; we have many members at various places around the world. At this time, there is one major organization affiliated with RPGA-USA; the D&D Players' Association, whose headquarters is in the United Kingdom. Members of the PA have full reciprocal priveleges when visiting the USA; they can pick up our latest newsletter and attend all RPGA-only events, such as meetings and tournaments at conventions. As an RPGA member in good standing, you are entitled to all the benefits of PA membership when you visit the UK.

If you wish to become an International Member (holding full members' rights in BOTH organizations), you may do so by sending a check or money order for $10.00 to RPGA HQ. We'll transfer the funds, and you will thereafter receive a PA membership card, button, and newsletter. [The price fluctuates with the value of the dollar vs. the British pound, so you might be billed for a slight extra amount, or receive a small refund.]

You may contact the D&D Players' Association at:

TSR UK, Ltd.
The Mill, Rathmore Road
Cambridge, CB1 4AD
United Kingdom
Attention: D&D PA

Some members in Australia have asked where to get D&D and AD&D supplies for their games at reasonable prices. If they have to buy by mail from this country, their costs can run up to $30 for a DM Guide alone! So we looked into the matter, and found that TSR games and accessories may by purchased through:

JEDKO
18 Fonceca St.
Mordialloc, Victoria
3195 Australia

Note that this company has no connection with TSR or the RPGA network; the information is provided for the convenience of our members.

SPELLING BEE

Ever since the creation of the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game (see the Gygax interview for details on that momentous occasion), players have been confused. The original set was written for folks who already played a lot of games, and it hasn't been until recently (the appearance of the D&D BASIC SET, Box 1) that a good, understandable version could be found. Even the AD&D system has inconsistencies, although it is the most detailed, completely usable system we've found. This is quite understandable; though written by one author, there were many editors, and the job of cross-referencing and double-checking would have taken a few years to result in a perfect job.

But the AD&D system works. I use it in my campaign with no variants, although I have created many subsystems to handle other details not covered in the books. It has served me well for over six years now, and my players have not complained about using a "by-the-book" mode. In fact, it gives them stability; they can be sure that I won't bring in non-standard monsters, spells, or other nasty surprises. It does force me to keep coming up with thought-provoking combinations of existing spells, items, traps, creatures, and so forth; but the harder I work, the more fun we all have.

I have been fortunate to have observed AD&D games in most parts of the country, clarifying some misunderstood points as I went and answering many questions about game details and rules. One thing has stood out, above all; there are as many ideas for using magic spells as there are players. Some spells are thought to be almost useless; many are misused and misunderstood. I think it's time to clear some things up, and share some of the ideas I've heard for using various spells.

In this column, I propose to examine each spell, one by one. If you have questions about the use of spells in AD&D games, and/or comments on the interesting applications and combinations of spells, please write to "SPELLING BEE", care of this newsletter.

NAME THAT NEWSLETTER!

Many readers of newsletter #1 found the "hidden contest" formed by the words at the top of the pages very quickly, and sent in their suggestions. Apologies for lack of clarity in the phrasing, but we only had 16 words to play with; the contest really is to find a name for the newsletter, and the answer is NOT "RPGA News".

We've received lots of good suggestions so far, but not one really grabs me. You see, we need a name that reflects our many interests: not just D&D or AD&D games, but the science fantasy of GAMMA WORLD games, the intrigue of TOP SECRET games, and the historical excitement of FIGHT IN THE SKIES (soon to be DAWN PATROL) games.

Therefore, the contest has been extended until December 31, 1981. The winner will receive one of the new RPGA modules and a two-year membership extension. So start thinking; we need a good name quickly. As usual, send your suggestions to "RPGA News", at the RPGA HQ address.

DAWN PATROL™ PREVIEW

By Designer Mike Carr

The new FIGHT IN THE SKIES™ 7th Edition is going to be called DAWN PATROL. Part of the new look is a section emphasizing the game's role playing aspect, and there are some interesting new rules to add "flavor" to the creation of each pilot personality. These are: rank, national origin, and age. Now you can create your own biographies of your favorite pilots!

Here's a capsule look at the new sections....

RANK & PROMOTION

Every new pilot personality is given a rank (determined by a die roll) when he first is placed upon the roster. The charts below list starting ranks for each nationality, along with a full listing of the flying ranks, to illustrate rank promotion possibilities. Underlined listings are enlisted, or NCO, ranks.

German

	Initial Rank
1	*Unteroffizier*
2	*Vizefeldwebel*
3	*Vizefeldwebel* *
4	Leutnant
5	Leutnant
6	Leutnant

Full Listing

Unteroffizier
Vizefeldwebel/Offizier Stellvertreter (equal ranks)
Leutnant
Obeleutnant
Hauptmann

* A further roll of 1 means the equivalent rank of *Offizier Stellvertreter*

Austro-Hungarian

	Initial Rank
1	*Feldwebel*
2	*Feldwebel*
3	*Feldwebel* *
4	Leutnant
5	Leutnant
6	Leutnant

Full Listing

Feldwebel/Offizier Stellvertreter (equal ranks)
Leutnant
Oberleutnant
Hauptmann

* A further roll of 1 means the equivalent rank of *Offizier Stellvertreter*

British

	Initial Rank **
1	2nd Lieutenant
2	2nd Lieutenant
3	Lieutenant
4	Lieutenant
5	Lieutenant
6	Captain

Full Listing

Sergeant
2nd Lieutenant
Lieutenant
Captain
Major

** British observers roll on a table of: 1, 2, 3 *Sergeant:* 4, 5 2nd Lieutenant; 6 Lieutenant.

American

	Initial Rank
1	2nd Lieutenant
2	2nd Lieutenant
3	Lieutenant
4	Lieutenant
5	Lieutenant
6	Lieutenant

Full Listing

2nd Lieutenant
Lieutenant
Captain
Major

French & Belgian

	Initial Rank
1	*Sergent*
2	*Adjudant*
3	Sous-Lieutenant
4	Sous-Lieutenant
5	Lieutenant
6	Lieutenant

Full Listing

Sergent
Adjudant
Sous-Lieutenant
Lieutenant
Capitaine

Italian

	Initial Rank
1	*Sergente*
2	*Sergente*
3	Sottotenente
4	Sottotenente
5	Tenente
6	Tenente

Full Listing

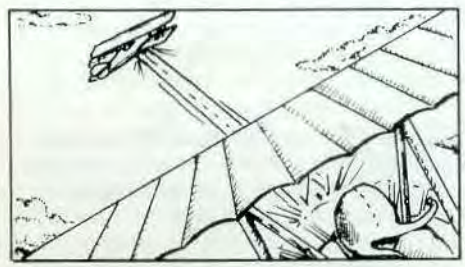
Sergente
Sottotenente
Tenente
Capitano
Maggiore

Rank has little meaningful effect in game terms, except to mark achievement. British and German ranks — notably the distinction between enlisted and officer status — have a direct bearing upon eligibility for certain awards and medals).

Promotion is a possibility (at the player's option) after every 5 kills scored by the pilot personality. A roll of 1, 2 means promotion to the next higher rank. If a promotion does *not* result, then the chance increases to 1, 2, 3 after the next 5 kills, then to 1, 2, 3, 4 after the next 5, and so on. Once a promotion *does* occur, the chances return to 1, 2 for the first attempt at the following rank.

All rolls for possible promotion should be handled in the open presence of the other players in the group, usually at the completion of the game session.

Pilots may not progress beyond the given rank limits for their nationality.



AGE

If a player desires to determine the age of a pilot for biographical purposes, a roll can be made on the following table to determine year of birth:

2	1888
3	1891
4	1893
5	1894
6	1895
7	1896
8	1897
9	1898
10	1892
11	1890
12	1889

NATIONAL ORIGIN

Determination of national origin allows an extra element in formulating a pilot's background. In the case of German pilots who achieve combat success, it will also determine eligibility for certain medals.

Using national origin and other background factors allows players to make up biographies for their pilots and add details to each one's individual identity.

German

The German air forces are made up of flyers from the 4 main kingdoms of the Empire.

2	Prussian
3	Prussian
4	Saxon
5	Prussian
6	Bavarian
7	Saxon
8	Wurttemberger
9	Prussian
10	Bavarian
11	Wurttemberger
12	Prussian

Austro-Hungarian

2	Czech
3	Slovakian
4	Croatian
5	Magyar (Hungarian)
6	Austrian
7	Austrian
8	Austrian
9	Magyar (Hungarian)
10	Bosnian
11	Slovene
12	Czech

French

The French air service includes its native sons and a melange of pilots of other nationalities attracted by the liberal French recruiting policies.

2	French
3	French
4	French
5	French
6	French
7	French
8	French
9	French
10	Roll on subtable
11	American
12	Roll on subtable

Lesser Allies/Neutrals Subtable

2	Montenegran
3	Norwegian/Danish (N)
4	Spanish (N)
5	Russian
6	Italian
7	Serbian
8	Rumanian
9	Portugeuse
10	Dutch (N)
11	Swedish/Swiss (N)
12	Japanese/Chinese

Belgian

2	Flemish
3	Flemish
4	Flemish
5	Flemish
6	Flemish
7	Flemish
8	Flemish
9	Walloon
10	Walloon
11	Walloon
12	Walloon

American

2	Middle Atlantic (DE, MD, NJ, NY, PA, VA)
3	New England (CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT)
4	Northwest (ID, MT, NV, OR, WA, WY)
5	Southeast (AL, FL, GA, MS, NC, SC)
6	New England (CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT)
7	Middle Atlantic (DE, MD, NJ, NY, PA, VA)
8	Great Lakes (IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI)
9	South Central (AR, KY, LA, MO, TN, WV)
10	Plains (IA, KS, NB, ND, OK, SD)
11	Southwest (AZ, CA, CO, NM, TX, UT)
12	Southwest (AZ, CA, CO, NM, TX, UT)

British

The British air forces include a wide variety of Empire representatives, as well as an occasional American.

2	Rhodesian
3	South African
4	Welsh
5	Scottish
6	British
7	British
8	British
9	Canadian
10	Australian/New Zealander
11	American
12	Irish

In the next article: Medals of the Nationalities, and how pilots can win them....

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WHITE RABBITS

In any organization as complex as the RPGA Network, there will be some problems and errors. Sometimes things get misplaced; sometimes people have a gripe. This column will contain our explanations of some problems, your gripes, and our solutions. We could keep it all quiet, and just show you the sunny sides; but (as we keep saying), it's YOUR organization, and we'll provide what YOU want. Including information about how we do things, and what can go wrong.

As you may recall, the white rabbit was late (in Lewis Carroll's "Alice in Wonderland"). Well, so are we, all too often. By way of explanation, please try to understand that RPGA Headquarters keeps a very small staff, and we're trying to handle thousands of members. Although we use TSR's main computer in a variety of ways — the only possible way to correlate information about all the games and gamers — there's still a lot that must be done by hand.

Many of you got your Initial Members Packets later than expected; prizes for the tournaments have been sent out late. We apologize, but also ask you to try to bear with us. You WILL get everything due to you, of course, if you haven't already; if you don't PLEASE let us know. Don't get mad...COMMUNICATE!

You're spending your money on RPGA memberships, and we're trying to give you more than your money's worth. We insist on quality in everything — the cards, pins, certificates, newsletter, tournaments, and so forth — and quality takes time and work. We believe that quality is what you want, and are willing to spend the time and effort to provide it. If you'd rather have lots of junk instead, let us know....

PINS: Many of the membership pins were badly bent in their journey through the US Postal System. Sometimes the bent pin damaged the other items in the initial package. If there's ANYTHING you got that is not in good condition, send it back to us; we will immediately send replacement items back to you.

MAILINGS: If you write to RPGA HQ, please help us all out by observing a few customs:

1. Write legibly. Print, or type, if possible; we've gotten a number of our letters back because we couldn't read the address. And we pay the postage, whether it makes it to you or not.
2. Include your name, address, and membership number on the letter itself, NOT just on the envelope; sometimes we don't get the envelopes (a mail service picks up and delivers to us).

HOW TO CREATE MONSTERS FOR D&D® BASIC AND EXPERT GAMES

By Jean Wells

The DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Fantasy Role Playing Game is the most exciting and popular game to come along in 50 years. Unfortunately, the D&D® game does not have as many monsters as the AD&D™ game; so the DMs must either continue to use the same old monsters — which the players are so familiar with that they either avoid the encounter altogether or slay the monster without much forethought and enthusiasm — or create new monsters, which may be a little to tough for the players to handle. A lot of DMs don't realize that monsters are *balanced* to fit easily into the game without giving them an unfair advantage over the players, and vice versa. So, you ask, how does one go about creating a well-balanced monster? Easy (I respond), and I will show how by using the following example:

A DM creates a wonderful monster he decides to call a "Hagertral". Now this fine creature is very tough. It has:

AC: 2
HD: 7
MV: 240"(80")/flying: 720"(240")
#AT: 6
D: 1-10 each
No. Appearing: 4-8 (10-100)
Save As: F7
Morale: 11
Treasure Type: Nil
Alignment: C

Nice monster, huh?

Nope. Too tough, especially for Basic and Expert level characters. Level is very important in creating a monster, as it tells you what level of characters can battle it fairly. (Now, asks a lady in the crowd, why is this monster too tough?)

First off it has 7 hit dice, which means it is at least a 7th level monster. On the average, that's about 30-40 hit points. Get the minimum number appearing and you get about 120-160 hit points worth of monsters. Compared to an average Basic and Expert party, which is between 2nd and 6th level, and you get about a 75-95 hit point variable in the monsters' favor. Good hit points are fine providing that everything else is weak, but the Hagertral has the potential to inflict 60 hit points of damage to just one character, and with just one monster fighting, not four of them. PLUS it can fly faster than a hawk and outrun a human.

Considering how many Hagertrals can be found together all in one place, all it would take is one very smart player to figure out how to control them, and before anyone knew it that character would be ruling the world. (Well, okay, maybe not the world, but at least a country.)

Let us say that the players *did* manage to slay the Hagertral, fierce critters that fear almost nothing (morale of 11, you see). What would be the reward for succeeding? Nothing! The Hagertrals own no treasure. Now this is all right if the Hagertrals are being used as guards, but what if they're not? Why bother to fight them in the first place?

This is why balance is important in creating monsters that are *fair* and are used at the appropriate level. One certainly wouldn't find a Hagertral written this way on a 1st level in a dungeon, nor on a 7th level (though it does have 7 HD). This monster is more suited to 13th or 14th level, far away from Basic and Expert level characters.

It is the balance between Armor Class, Hit Dice, and Damage that are considered to be the most vital, but *all* the stats should be taken seriously. When a monster is given a good Armor Class (or a good mode of attack, or fairly high Hit Dice), it should have *some* type of weakness. Weaknesses can range from weakness to fire, water, or cold to (perhaps) a certain type of gem or metal that can slay or do double damage to the monster.

Monsters with poor Armor Classes, Hit Dice, and Damage could be made immune to the same things that other monsters consider baneful, like **lightning bolts** or certain *types* of spells. The DM must also consider how much damage the monster will do, in relation to how many appear. (The number appearing is also important to what the monster's level or Hit Dice will be. Generally, the more that appear, the lower the monster level should be.) To have a monster appear in no less than a group of 4 which can each do 60 points of damage is a *very* tough monster, and definitely not suited for Basic or Expert games.

(It would take, for example, about 70 kobolds — all at maximum hit points, each carrying a +2 weapon and a ring of protection — to be able to have the same effect as a *single* dragon. Low level characters can handle a normal amount of kobolds, but dragons — even just one —can outclass them easily.)

The Hagertral's six attacks that each do 1-10 are very tough at *any* level, and definitely favor the monsters. There are exceptions to this, but only when meant to act as a solitary guard or as a trap that is better to avoid than fight.

When determining a monster's Armor Class, the dexterity of the monster must be considered in addition to the kind of body protection it has. Is it fast? Slow? Thick-skinned? Does it have tough scales? A quick and light monster with very little body protection may have an Armor Class of 3 simply because it can avoid being hit. A monster with tough thick skin that is slow and cumbersome may *also* have an Armor Class of 3, simply because its skin is so tough the blows don't affect it!

The monster's speed and type of movement also helps determine how much damage it will do. A monster with few Hit Dice which does little damage might be able to keep up with a party that is trying to avoid it. For example, a skeleton is a weak monster but it can easily follow the characters, thus forcing them to fight. This can be a pain, as this wimpy monster can do some damage when the party would rather take none. Or try a very large monster that is awkward and cannot move fast (if it can move at all!) which can do *lots* of damage in one blow — but since the party can flee the monster, the large amount of damage is acceptable.

A monster that will be hard to defeat should always have a decent reward, but a weak and easily defeated monster should have little treasure, if any at all. The more difficult the challenge, the better the reward for overcoming it. However, bear in mind that the reward should not be *greater* than the monsters' challenge. A kobold should not have a suit of magic plate mail as its treasure; a few copper pieces, maybe silver, but not much more than that. But if the players defeat a horde of red and black dragons, the reward should be more than a handful of gold and a peacock feather!

Some monsters will have special abilities, although these should be the exception and not the rule. Special abilities can consist of being able to cast spells (reserved for monsters of high intelligence), turn invisible, making things turn to stone or mud or sawdust, seeing in the dark, etc. Intelligence is also considered to be a special ability in non-humanoid creatures, and these creatures may often have a society, religion, and a set of laws and customs which can resemble ones created by human societies.

When determining if a monster will have a special ability, this ability must also be balanced with Armor Class, Hit Dice and Damage. Some monsters who have special abilities don't do damage, thus they may be allowed better Hit Dice *or* Armor Class (not both). One rule of thumb I often used when assigning a special ability was "Think about it from the player's point of view". Running into a low-level, weak (Armor Class and Hit Dice) creature that only needs to roar in the player's direction to kill him is *too* unbalanced. The player has no choice but to die! That is not fair, nor is it fun. Players should always have a chance to defeat a monster that is par with them at an equal level (give or take a few levels).

Of course, it is to be expected that a bunch of first level characters will not be able to defeat a vampire, but a vampire is definitely not at or near their level, so it should be avoided.

The last thing to consider is the monster's alignment. This helps determine how the monster will behave. A chaotic monster is an evil one, and will kill just to kill or for whatever other reason it needs and finds suitable. Neutral ones will refrain from killing just to kill, and should view the world as something to be left alone unless it invades their private domain. Lawful monsters will help the world as best they can, but not to the point where it will unnecessarily endanger their life.

Hagertral

AC: 2 (**the only stat unchanged**)
HD: 3+1
MV: 90"(30")/flying 150"(50")
#AT: 3
D: 1-4/1-4/1-6
No. Appearing: 1-4 (1-8)
Save As: F3
Morale: 7
Treasure Type: C, T
Alignment: N

(Now all that's left for the DM to do is the description of the monster:).

A Hagertral is a small two-legged creature with huge yellow and pink feathered wings and greenish brown fur. It has one great eye in the center of its face, no nose, and a rather large mouth with two rows of very sharp teeth. The Hagertral has a forked tongue that it uses to "smell" with, much like that of a snake. Its body resembles a human's but instead of hands and feet it has paws with long retractable claws.

Then the DM must decide where the monster lives, what it eats, how it prefers to fight, and the other characteristics he or she feels are necessary:)

The Hagertral lives high in the mountains with a mate and usually 1-4 young. This creature, being somewhat intelligent, worships the sky as supreme goddess of all. As a rule the Hagertrals will shun humans and their kind, although they are capable of the Common speech. Their own language, which consists of a series of whistles, grunts, moans and clicks, is too complex for anyone but Hagertrals to understand without magical aid.

For the most part, Hagertrals will attack any intruder or stranger first, and then (when they consider it safe) they'll ask questions. When engaging in combat, the Hagertral will use its mouth and hand claws (it wil not use the claws on its feet to attack with, as these are reserved for carrying things when flying). Some Hagertrals have been known to use weapons, but they are magic ones taken from some adventurer who challenged them and failed.

Hagertrals are meat eaters. Their favorite food is mountain fowl, but they also enjoy monkey, rabbit, fish and halfling.

Hagertrals never keep their wealth in their lair. They fear that by doing so they invite thieves, who might harm or capture their young (in some mountain villages and cities, a young Hagertral is worth about 200 gp); so instead, they hide their treasure in the wilderness or on high isolated mountains.

If the DMs will use these examples of how to create a monster, they should be able to keep their campaigns hopping with all kinds of exciting and unexpected monsters that have a chance of being beaten. Remember:

- *Create on set levels. Don't throw a monster with 7 hit dice at players who have only an average of 3.*
- *If the monster has one extremely tough characteristic, make sure the other stats are weak. (Berserkers have a ×1 to hit, but they are 1st level monsters). When you give the monster a "goody", be sure to make up for it somehow!*

TURNBULL TALKING

[Editor's Note: This column is a regular one in Great Britain's D&D PA Newsletter, and is reprinted here with their permission. Don Turnbull has been involved in hobby gaming for many years, and is currently head of TSR UK, Ltd.]

Though not (quite?) at the point of incipient collapse, I have seen more years of gaming than many and it strikes me a bit belatedly that there has been what amounts to a change in style. Without me noticing it until now.

Passing quickly through the Monopoly stage (ah — there's a game style which has changed not one bit in 15 years, though change is long overdue) I remember discovering the newly-published Avalon Hill game with what amounted to manic fervour. The title? Battle of the Bulge. I did say it's been a long time.

These were the days of what I call the linear games hobby. For it was a line —one title to the next, the new title often not published until six months after the last. So the hobby gamer got to know each game really well then — there were very few games, and what else was there to do? We followed a main line. There were no branches and no parallel tracks.

Now there are branches, parallel tracks and crossovers in such quantity that even the most megalomaniac model railway fan might raise an eyebrow. SPI really started it, with a flood of new games so torrential that to get to know any one of them really well meant avoiding perhaps two dozen others altogether, which isn't easy for the games fan. Others were not far behind — even august AH itself.

Even later came the D&D game, and shortly after it a torrent of imitations, 'developments', 'supplements' and 'improvements' from those who, in general, lacked the creativity and disliked the hard work of originality in design but wanted to make a lot of cash out of it.

It's interesting to note, stepping onto another topic for a moment, how much these imitators now decry the original and accuse Gary Gygax of not having done enough. It's laughable (laughter is a good alternative to aggression if you can make the jump); the man has, after all, given us an entirely new game, an entirely new game-style, and an entirely new hobby. I have no sympathy for those who, having asked the bus to slow down so that they can jump on, then complain because it isn't going fast enough.

But we are now in the parallel games hobby where there are so many options, so many tempting paths to follow, that the newcomer faces a bewildering task if any sense is to be made of it and enjoyment derived from it.

The secret, I believe, lies in the hobby itself and particularly in the clubs. How many of those reading this owe their present enjoyment of D&D or AD&D games to a club, or set of individuals, who first introduced them to it? A club can provide the linear effect — by guiding the newcomer past all the dead ends onto the main line. It can alert the newcomer to the cheap imitation, the blatant rip-off, and the money-grubbing copy. In the end, club players know what has given them the most satisfaction in the last five years and they are in the best position to pass this on to others.

So thank goodness for the clubs — long may they flourish. And thank goodness for the D&D game — THE game —which will endure while all its imitators fall by the wayside.

MUTANTS:

A Representative Sample Of The Weak Ones

"From the Chronicles of Random of the Many Names"

BY JAMES M. WARD

There are many Gamma World creatures too terrible to even think about. These beings roam the newly created swamps and plains of the war ravaged Earth. Several intelligent races have started cataloging them to increase the chances of others surviving encounters with the things when met in the wilds. One such chronicler was Random of the Many Names. What follows is a brief portion of the creatures he has observed in his travels over the planet. They are many and varied but I think you will agree all are worth avoiding if possible.

CRADENGEEN "Mutated Humanoid"

APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: 2
MOVEMENT: 18
HIT DICE: 24 (specie Average Hit Points: 120
AVERAGE HEIGHT: 3 meters
MENTAL STRENGTH
(Specie Average): 7
INTELLIGENCE
(Specie Average): 7
DEXTERITY
(Specie Average): 7
CHARISMA
(Specie Average): 7
CONSTITUTION
(Specie Average): 18
PHYSICAL STRENGTH
(Specie Average): 18

MENTAL MUTATIONS PER SPECIE:

Double Force Field
Anti Life Leech

PHYSICAL MUTATIONS PER SPECIE:

Quadruple Heightened Strength
Partial Carapace
Regeneration

Coming out of the radiation field areas of the destroyed cities of Gamma World, this creature is feared by all beings on the planet. Using its massive claws (doing 2-20 points per attack plus the tremendous strength bonus') this creature has been known to rip through duralloy plate to get at its prey. It will purposely try to destroy the most powerful being or robotic unit in any given group of such and only the most potent of weapons has been known to destroy the thing in battle. These beings can be found in almost any area with large concentrations of radiation and they are worshiped as gods by all Radioactivists.

BREAM "Nonorganic Intelligence"

APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: 2
MOVEMENT: Nil
HIT DICE: N/A
AVERAGE HEIGHT: Variable
MENTAL STRENGTH
(Specie Average): 18
INTELLIGENCE
(Specie Average): 18
DEXTERITY
(Specie Average): N/A
CHARISMA
(Specie Average): N/A
CONSTITUTION
(Specie Average): N/A
PHYSICAL STRENGTH
(Specie Average): N/A

MENTAL MUTATIONS PER SPECIE:

Heightened Intelligence
Telepathy
Empathy
Quadruple Mental Blast
Mass Mind

PHYSICAL MUTATIONS PER SPECIE:

Complete Organic Osmosis

One of the first nonorganic intelligences to be created during the dark years, this creature is bent on amassing knowledge of all different types. It appears as a giant crystal and this being is able to absorb anything organic to make it grow and thrive. It is able to create little nodes of itself that intelligent beings break off and take along with them. These nodes are extensions of the creature that enable it to amass knowledge. It will also impart knowledge to the carrier in the form of mental knowledge on questions asked to it.

CRATICAL "Mutated Lizard"

APPEARING: 1-4
ARMOR CLASS: 4
MOVEMENT: 9///12
HIT DICE: 7
(Specie Average Hit Points: 35)
AVERAGE HEIGHT: 3 meters
MENTAL STRENGTH
(Specie Average): 9
INTELLIGENCE
(Specie Average): 9
DEXTERITY
(Specie Average): 14
CHARISMA
(Specie Average): 3
CONSTITUTION
(Specie Average): 18
PHYSICAL STRENGTH
(Specie Average): 16

MENTAL MUTATIONS PER SPECIE:

Cryokinesis
Telekinesis
Telekinetic Arm
Total Healing

PHYSICAL MUTATIONS PER SPECIE:

Gas Generation
Spines
Total Carapace

The creature has adapted itself so that it appears to be a giant barrel cactus. Its arms are able to strike out for 3d12 points of damage and it often uses its telekinetic arm to strike out at a distance. The creature commonly inhabits dry arid areas and plants seeds of the cactus so that it will blend into the areas it inhabits. The creature will attack any four legged creature, but seems to ignore humanoids of all types. For this reason, it is often captured by races living in desert areas and tamed to be used as guards.

GUROSH "Mutated Feline"

APPEARING: 2-40
ARMOR CLASS: 9
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT DICE: 5
(Specie Average Hit Points: 25)
AVERAGE HEIGHT: 19 centimeters
MENTAL STRENGTH
(Specie Average): 3
INTELLIGENCE
(Specie Average): 4
DEXTERITY
(Specie Average): 18
CHARISMA
(Specie Average): 3
CONSTITUTION
(Specie Average): 18
PHYSICAL STRENGTH
(Specie Average): 10

MENTAL MUTATIONS PER SPECIE:

Anti Life Leech
Telekinetic Flying
Empathy

PHYSICAL MUTATIONS PER SPECIE:

Wings
Poison Fangs (intensity 4)

This small winged flyer is a voracious eater of all things red. It will fly down on any sign of blood and attack all moving life in the area. The bite can do 2-24 points of damage as it flies down at great speed and rips at its prey. Because of the mental and physical effort it uses in flying, it requires three times its own body weight in food every day. The creature is commonly found in forests or tropical areas, but groups of them have been found along large bodies of water. They seem to be able to sense the most powerful being of any given group and attack this member of the group first as a common practice.

AIRSHOON "Mutated Humanoid"

APPEARING: 1-100
ARMOR CLASS: 8
MOVEMENT: 10///25
HIT DICE: 15
(Specie Average Hit Points: 80)
AVERAGE HEIGHT: 1.7 meters
MENTAL STRENGTH
(Specie Average): 15
INTELLIGENCE
(Specie Average): 15
DEXTERITY
(Specie Average): 15
CHARISMA
(Specie Average): 15
CONSTITUTION
(Specie Average): 15
PHYSICAL STRENGTH
(Specie Average): 15

MENTAL MUTATIONS PER SPECIE:

Heightened Intelligence
Telekinesis (triple strength)
Telepathy

PHYSICAL MUTATIONS PER SPECIE:

Wings
Increased Speed
Sonic Attack Ability
Partial Carapace

Adapting from the primate family, these creatures have created homes in most of the mountainous regions of the world. They have established their own technology and are able to create huge hot air balloon platforms that they take on hunting trips so that they do not strain their own flying capacity. They are totally emersed in all things that fly and have made studies into all types of avian life so that they have numerous life forms as guards and helpers. They are fiercely territorial and will not allow the establishment of villages or homes in what they consider their homes. They have the use of finely crafted bows, crossbows, light javelins, and metal darts. Both sexes have equal responsibilities and the young are not allowed to leave the village area until they have been trained in hunting and battle styles.

WESS WREEL "Mutated Grape Vine"

APPEARING: 1-4
ARMOR CLASS: 3
MOVEMENT: 2
HIT DICE: 10
(Specie Average Hit Points: 30)
AVERAGE HEIGHT: 10 meters
MENTAL STRENGTH
(Specie Average): 14
INTELLIGENCE
(Specie Average): 17
DEXTERITY
(Specie Average): 8
CHARISMA
(Specie Average): 3
CONSTITUTION
(Specie Average): 18
PHYSICAL STRENGTH
(Specie Average): 18

MENTAL MUTATIONS PER SPECIE:

Force Field Generation
Anti Life Leech
Pyrokinesis

PHYSICAL MUTATIONS PER SPECIE:

Heat Generation
Spines

The vine can be found in all areas of the world and its intelligence allows it to create an area of safety while the environment around it can be quite dangerous. The vine purposely protects unintelligent animals in the area so that they tend to cluster and burrow around its growing area. When it is threatened by intelligent creatures, it stimulates the mutated life around it to attack and usually the multiple attacks from the surrounding life is enough to drive its enemies away. It also amasses a large supply of intact ANCIENT artifacts, but is very slow to figure them out due to its alien thought patterns. These vines have been known to befriend intelligent mutants and guard the mutant dens with its usual tricks. The vines have been tamed by certain secret societies and they are used as village guards. They must be presented with artifacts and a great deal of fertilization for this to occur.

ROBOTIC UNIT:
The Companion

POWER SOURCE:
Solar and/or Broadcast

ARMOR CLASS: 4

MOVEMENT:
Repulsion System moves unit at 30 KPH

HIT DICE:
10 (Average Hit Points: 60)

AVERAGE SIZE:
1 meter tall x ¾ meters around (general oval)

BOT SYSTEMS:

1 tentacle extends to 3 meters (lifting capacity 50 kilos)
1 claw tentacle extends to 1 meter (lifting capacity 20 kilos)
2 power light beams (500 candle power)
Verbalizing Modulator
Utilizes the Sardin memory storage and logic circuits

SENSOR SYSTEMS:

Normal Optics (range 1 kilometer)
Infrared Scanners (range 50 meters)
Sound detection unit (range +/- 3,000 decibels)

CONTROL SYSTEMS:

Verbal control with the first 3 activations

The unit was designed just before the time of the great wars to aid its master in all of the owner's endeavors. Its logic circuits allow it to quickly learn any given language. While its master program has the standard injunctions against violence, it has wide latitude in other parameters so that its master can easily program it to accomplish the tasks that must be done by the unit. The unit is designed to withstand all environments and was used in all facets of life before the war. Because of the delicate nature of the internal circuits, any punctures to its surface will cause disfunctions and make the unit inoperable. The unit when found whole will activate itself with the direction of broadcast power or solar power on its reflective surfaces. These units are highly prized by the leaders of all Knights of Genetic Purity and are used for badges of distinction among them.

RPGA GIFT CATALOG

The original plans for the RPGA Gift Catalog involved a nice color brochure, with lots of wonderful items for your exclusive purchase.

Do you know how much those things cost? AARGH!

Well, we do have a few things for sale, and others soon to come. Listed below are a few items (which many of you may already have, if you purchased them at a convention) and our first four modules. Check the avialability dates for those modules; they're being sent off to the printer as soon as we finish the details of publication, and will NOT be available until the dates given.

For each item, the price and postage costs are given separately. When buying only one item by mail, the cost to you is the total of these two. However, for each extra item you order, knock a quarter off ($.25). We can save postage costs by sending more than one item in the package.

We're off to a pretty good start That color catalog should be out next year, if you like what we've selected so far.

Now, about all those other neat things: what do you want?

Here's a list of things we COULD get, and sell: Bumper stickers, Pens, Pencils, Mugs, Drinking glasses, Key chains, Dice, Belt buckles, Briefcases, Hats, Jackets, Book bags, T-shirts, Decals, Miniature figures, Playing grids for use with figures; specify your preference of style and/or design (D&D, AD&D, or RPGA logo).

Some of these things will be popular, without question; but it costs many bucks to stock or arrange for the production of these things. We'll add other items regularly, as soon as we know what you want. YOU have to tell us which things look best to you.

If we get one letter saying the RPGA pen would be "cute", we probably won't get it for a long time, if at all. But a few hundred requests for something will probably work. So as I said:

LET US KNOW!

Rather than using up space here with an order blank (and ask you to cut it out, which you probably won't do anyway), we'll take your order in the form of a letter to RPGA HQ. Enclose a check or money order (made out to RPGA) for the amount — and remember to include the given postage costs — or include charge information. We accept Visa and Mastercard, and (if you charge your purchase to one of them) need the following information:

Visa or Mastercard number
Mastercard Interbank number (left side of card)
Expiration date
Your signature
Phone number
Address

When charging your purchase, 4% Wisconsin sales tax will be added to all items except for DRAGON subscriptions, as required by law.

FIGURE CASE

After looking at lots of carrying cases for miniature figures and other game accessories, we've found this one. It's better than any we've seen, but we only have about 100 left; we might be able to get more in the future, but don't count on it.

It's a black injection-molded plastic box, 12" x 10" x 1.5", with a foam insert which keeps up to 32 figures (plus dice) in separate areas, fully insulated from knocks and chips; when the case is closed, the figures are surrounded by foam, thanks to extra padding inside the lid and on the bottom. A word of advice; glue this padding down yourself, as well as the foam insert; the original stickum is a little scarce in spots. If not glued, the weight of the figures can compress the foam, allowing the figures to touch each other. Not serious, but easily avoided.

A durable handle and catch complete this handsome product nicely, making it convenient and safe for figure carrying and care. It is available exclusively through RPGA HQ, and nowhere else; NOTE — only one case per order, due to the limited quantity on hand.

PRICE: $9.00
POSTAGE: $2.00

FIGHTERS WHEEL

This gadget has ALL the details you need when your fighter gets into a fight: base "to hit" scores, weapons details (including damages, length, and speed factor), and the most ignored (but most realistic) detail of AD&D combat: "to hit" adjustments for armor types. You know that full-page chart in the Players Handbook, where it's too much trouble to find the one number you need in the whole bunch? It's all here, and in much simpler form.

This is produced by the TSR (UK), Ltd., and is a durable plastic wheel (much like a 'circular slide rule') that covers ALL the weapons for ALL levels of Fighter, using both sides to do it. No limit to size of order; check it out.

PRICE: $4.50
POSTAGE: $ .50

BELT BUCKLE

This handsome brass-finished buckle prominently features the new TSR logo, and can be attached to any suitable belt. It is available only in this limited edition, and NOTE — only one per order please.

PRICE: $5.00
POSTAGE: $1.50

DRAGON MAGAZINE

Are you subscribing to DRAGON magazine, the monthly role-playing adventure aid? If you're not, this is a reminder that each new RPGA member has ONE chance to subscribe at a discount: only $20 for a one-year subscription, saving $4 off the normal subscription price. This is available only to new members, and only for a one-year subscription.

PRICE: $20.00
POSTAGE: included!

RPGA AD&D MODULES

Each RPGA AD&D tournament uses modules designed by (or at least approved by) RPGA HQ. Each is available at the convention in a numbered limited pre-publication edition, and afterwards in a normal, illustrated, printed form. They may come out later as TSR modules, but you can get them far in advance of that release.

These modules were used as opening, semifinal, or final rounds at various GEN CON game conventions in 1981.

R-1: TO THE AID OF FALX

A group of strangers (levels 5-9) gather to help a nephew of Bahamut out of a fix. He's a silver dragon, and may be overcome by the baddies, who have stolen a few potions of Silver Dragon Control — which you must find, penetrating a dangerous complex in the process. 16 pages.

AVAILABLE: January 1, 1982
PRICE: $3.50
POSTAGE: $ .50

R-2: THE INVESTIGATION OF HYDELL

You and your comrades, all multi-classed and level 5/5, are commissioned to find out who's behind a mysteriously protected slave trade. The three-level complex is occupied, and usually predictable; but watch out for the big guys! 32 pages.

AVAILABLE: February 1, 1982
PRICE: $4.50
POSTAGE: $ .75

R-3: THE EGG OF THE PHOENIX

In this epic tale, the very fate of the world rests on the return of an artifact, known as the Egg of the Phoenix, by the 6 adventurers (levels 5-9). To get it, you must traverse some dangerous caves, up a huge pit and across a deadly forest, then through a Gate to the Negative Material Plane, where the Egg is stashed and guarded. 32 pages.

AVAILABLE: March 1, 1982
PRICE: $4.50
POSTAGE: $ .75

R-4: DOC'S ISLAND

At the beginning of this adventure, the epilogue to R-3 (above), the same group — minus one casualty — brings the Egg to its proper keeper. He has a nice castle on an island, and the dungeon below contains a Holy Sword! Beware, for the going can get quite rough during this ultimate test of a Paladin's mettle. For 5 characters, levels 6-10. 32 pages.

AVAILABLE: April 1, 1982
PRICE: $4.50
POSTAGE: $ .75

Notes For the Dungeon Master

Miscellaneous Notes, Part II

Last issue's Notes dealt with some of my favorite tricks and traps. This month's has more, from RPGA Assistant Coordinator Bill Hoyer, whose gaming experience dates back to the first TSR game conventions and beyond.

This can't go on very long, as everyone runs out of ideas eventually; and the smartest of you seem to be holding back, saving your best for your players. More power to you! But we hope that you'll share with the rest of us, eventually.

In the future, we hope to expand into tips for good Dungeon Mastering, handling problems in the campaign and the players, and other DMish activities. With these, as well as with tricks and traps, send your idea contributions to RPGA HQ.

One parting warning; to be completely fair, the characters should (with sufficient ingenuity, contacts, and/or cash) be able to duplicate the devices and tricks you use. If you don't want them to get them — DON'T PUT THEM IN!

— FM

1. One-way revolving gates, similar to those in city subway exits, force the players in a certain direction (for nasty purposes of your own, of course).
2. Upon opening the door, the room beyond is seen to be totally dark. "Ah!" says a cleric, "a darkness spell; I'll toss in some magical light." However, the walls, floor, and ceiling are covered with mirrors. The resultant confusion and blindness (and possibly magical mirror effects to boot) are worth watching....
3. While proceeding down a sloping passage, the party triggers a cascade of slippery liquid, originating uphill from them. The party members slide into each other, from the rear forward. Flammable slippery liquids, like oil, can be ignited if desired.
4. That spongy floor, which didn't harm anyone, turns out to have been a large ink pad. The party has been leaving a trail for over a turn, as the colorless ink dries into luminescent footprints!
5. Another boring series of empty rooms ...well, not quite. As the characters proceed, they slowly shrink; but the rooms get a lot smaller, too. The dead-end series is highlighted by a battle with seemingly giant insects (actually normal size); but the fun comes when, upon leaving, the players find that the rooms are getting a LOT bigger, and the doors that much harder to open. (Treat the duration similar to an Enlarge spell, reversed.)
6. This one's an oldie but goodie: the walls start closing in on the characters, and they can't get the door open. The walls stop about 18" apart (hardly room to use a dagger, even). A perfect setup ...but nothing else happens, except that the door opens by itself in an hour or so.
7. WIRES! If made fine enough (which could be a rather costly process, depending on your world's technology), wires can be almost invisible, or so close that only Minute Seeing or Detection of Invisibility can find them. Imagine one stretched across a coridor, electrified; or just as trip wires for other traps.
8. The Paths of Chaos, alias the Mad Mapper. Certain rooms, or areas, or corridors, or levels of the dungeon shift around. They might just turn 90 degrees, or sideways or upside down; or they could start switching places with each other. Maybe at some time during the day, the biggest treasure — and accompanying monster — moves from room #200 to room #1. "There MUST be a method to all this," mutters the mage, "if we can get enough data...."

LETTERS (cont. from p. 2)

get pretty exciting, especially when you've got the treasure and are limping (with reduced movement) towards home with a dragon on your tail.

The rules are simple, the quality high, and advanced rules are nice once you've got the hang of the basic game. And when you get good at solo play, try it with a friend; it's a whole new game.

"When will the Star Frontiers™ game be released? And why are there no RPGA tournaments on the west coast?!" — RG, California

The Star Frontiers™ science fiction role playing game will be released in 1982. I've played it a few times; with the latest revisions, expansion, and playtesting, it seems really good. TSR has had a lot of experience with role playing games — more than anyone else, in fact — and they won't release a whole new game system without making sure that it's in darn good shape. I think you'll like it.

When there's a GEN CON® West game convention, RPGA will be there.

"I would like to submit a module for RPGA publication. How might I go about doing this?" — WK, Delaware

RPGA AD&D modules are those used in previous RPGA tournaments. Bearing this in mind, and knowing about the RPGA tournament system (see the back page of this newsletter), you must FIRST write to us and get a legal release form; otherwise we can't even look at it. Then you send in the module and the form together. If the module meets our standards in quality, and is standard in other respects (no variants, and all new creatures must be approved by TSR designers), AND is what we're looking for in a tournament module, we'll work out the details (such as payment) from there.

"I'd like to counter a few of the points which Mr. Gygax raised in regards to rules variations. First, I think it's important to remember that people play games for enjoyment. If a given group of players feels that AD&D games are more enjoyable with a few changes, so be it! Unless these players intend to become seriously involved in tournament play, they have no reason to worry about conformity.

"Second, it is somewhat unfair to make blanket statements such as '...all the changes that are made are usually foolish...'. Sure, there are bad games run using variant rules, but there are also many bad campaigns being run 'by the book'. By the same token, there are a number of high-quality campaigns which bear little resemblance to the original TSR rules.

"In my own game circle, proposed rule changes are evaluated by from 3 to 6 practicing DMs to determine impact on players, existing characters, and game balance. If the changes are major, they are playtested several times before a decision is made. Finally, all changes and precedents are published in a DM's newsletter to ensure consistent play within our own group, so the players know what to expect. The result is more enjoyable for our particular style of play.

"In order to serve the broadest audience, I imagine that you will concentrate on official game rules. Still, I hope that you will make room for intelligent discussion of variations from time to time." — BN, California

The interview with Gary does contain a number of debatable opinions. But in my own travels I've seen many games where the DM uses a variant that the players may not like, and games where players are tearing their hair out while the DM's having a ball. This is OFTEN caused by a lack of consideration; it sounds like you've been using a quite reasonable method of weeding out the unfair and ill-considered variants. But I urge you to find out what your players think of the changes made by your group of DMs.

You seem to share our opinion that games are played to have fun, but that tournaments MUST be 'by-the-book' for many reasons. We sure don't mind discussion; we included a short variant in the first newsletter — followed by our solid objections to it.

TOP SECRET TRANSMISSIONS by Allen Hammack

BEGIN MESSAGE
BY AUTHORITY OF: "Silencer"
TO: RPGA TOP SECRET™ Players

MESSAGE: Does the person in the picture remind the reader of someone? Someone in particular? An entire group of agents, perhaps? Does the average TS player in your campaign resemble this fella, with an assault rifle, some grenades, and a backpack full of plastique thrown in?

The man in the photograph is actually selling holsters, but I think he illustrates a good point. TS players who also play DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® games will recognize a parallel of the "Elmer Fudd" type of character; not a backpack in the world could contain all of the equipment some players claim they are bringing with them! Dealing with these players requires patience, but often a practical demonstration will bring them into a reasonable frame of mind. One shoulder arm, one side arm, some grenades, and a backpack are all I normally permit one character to carry, and if they do try to manage all of that, I'll give 'em a weighted backpack, a two-by-four (instead of a rifle), and some rocks in their pockets instead of grenades — then I have them run around the building once or twice! *Then* I cut their movement rates and "to hit" chances, and I rarely get an argument.

The popularity of "commando raid"-type missions cannot be denied. At the TOP SECRET® Seminar at GenCon® XIV (which a good many of you managed to infiltrate despite our secret location —good job!), the Director of Administrations (old MR himself!) and I heard from many Admins that this was preferred by their players over the more mundane investigative-type missions. This is all right, because TOP SECRET was designed with both in mind and is a flexible game. However, if one type of mission starts to predominate the campaign could be imbalanced. I like to play in "blow up anything that moves"-type games on occasion, but the cool, thinking investigations are very challenging as well.

If the commando raids begin to predominate, assign some missions where these tactics will prove disastrous to the mission. One example, without giving away too much: at the TS tournament at GenCon XIV, part of the assignment included the rescue of some hostages. One team of agents found the hostages, along with a couple of terrorists that were guarding them. The team's solution was to toss grenades into the small room and close the door. Naturally, many hostages died — and many of the team's points were lost! Assuming such a team survives, you can imagine the chewing out they would get from their boss at the completion of that mission!

Sometimes bad luck haunts an otherwise reasonable player. At the tournament, one agent with below-average Coordination was climbing a rope-and-grapple about 10 feet. I told him he'd have to make a Coordination check, mentally giving him a 98% chance of success. He rolled 99, so I told him he had slipped and slightly injured an ankle, and his movement was cut to ¾ normal (this is "Admin's Discretion", folks!). The next time he had to climb I gave him the same chance; he rolled 00. I said, "You seem to have injured your other ankle. Your movement is cut to ½ normal." In yet another attempt, as his fellow agent watched in disbelief, he rolled 99 again — yes, you guessed it, he was down to ¼ movement! This was getting ridiculous, and I told him the next time that happened I'd have to give him Life Level damage. Fortunately, things went all right in the next couple of attempts, and then the two agents were at a point where they decided to rappel down — again, only 10 feet — to attack a suspected terrorist position. The healthy one went down one side to draw fire, while "Crutches" Malone was to spray them with automatic fire while their attention was diverted. Well, the unlucky one makes his move —and rolls 00. If there were such a thing as Misfortune Points, this agent would corner the market. Landing on two bum ankles, I had to rule that he collapsed in an agonized heap and gave him one point of Life Level damage. It was unfortunate for his partner that he collapsed, because he had to at least kneel to be able to shoot at the terrorists through the window....

I'd like to take this opportunity to remind everyone that questions concerning the Rasmussen Files should be addressed to DRAGON™ magazine, while rules questions go to TOP SECRET Questions, c/o TSR Hobbies, Inc. Thank you!

END MESSAGE
CLEAR

ROCKSNOZ

Sometime ago, in this very universe, before the last big bang, there was a world very similar to ours. It was populated by many successive generations of living things. All of which, miraculously, led to races of intelligent beings, coexisting with a group they call huemans.

Today, this world (known as Nidd) has reached a state of hueman civilization comparable to ours. Fortunately, in the land of Nidd, no chemicals combine to make gunpowder, and nuclear weapons are impossible. To make up for this deficiency, the denizens of Nidd have turned to magic. Thus when massive genocide is required, evildoers turn to flashy displays of neckromancey, sortsery, and netherdomain.

Fortunately, no one sortseror, or neckromanticizer, can ever gather in enough magicks to overpower all the others. Thus Nidd exists in a constant state of conflict. It is out of this confusion that our heroes emerge.

In the last battle for the great city of Danvelelc, the mighty mage Moodah defeated his enemies and captured many of their soldiers. Moodah, being wise, quickly turned these captives into "civil servants" (slaves), and set them to work rebuilding Danvelelc. Among the captives were three companions, brought together by unusual circumstances.

As members of the municipal sewer reconstruction team, Rocksnoz, Fuzfoot, and Weezix came to be fast friends. Through clever planning and skillful execution they managed an escape through a little-known waste treatment pit. From there they stole a small boat and rowed till the river sank into the mires. Lost, and without food, they have been wandering aimlessly ever since...

ROCKSNOZ, Molnode of Mudholz. Far north of Danvelelc is a land of brawling fighters who eke out a living in the scrublands known as Mudholz. It is a rotten place to live. All those who do, don't want to...which probably explains all the brawling. Rocksnoz was destined to become ruler of the land, and he was raised to be king. However, at the age of 12, his parents told him of his destiny. In terror, he fled Mudholz (no one in their right mind would stay there) to wander among the cities on the plains.

THE RPGA TOURNAMENT SYSTEM

At the GEN CON® East game convention in July, the RPGA staff tried out a newly devised system for AD&D Tournaments. It turned out to be a rousing success and was used at the GEN CON convention in August, too. The basic details are explained hereafter; but in a word, it is DEMOCRATIC.

Pardon us while we blow our horn a bit: the reviews of the RPGA Tournament system have not just been "good", or even "very good". Over 90% of the response has been fantastic; experimenting with methods, we seem to have hit upon one that really works. It's got bugs in it, and we're working on it; but overall, it seems to be just what YOU want. Which is what we're all about, anyway.

The most noticeable difference between the RPGA system and other established role playing Tournament systems is the method of advancement. This is NOT a team system; individual players compete against each other, and individuals progress (if they are good enough). Of each team, at least half of the players — often more — progress to the next round of play!

The prime consideration for advancement is overall role playing ability; the second most important is knowledge of the game rules; and the third is cooperation with the other players, within the restrictions of the alignment of the characters used. It's very hard to put an accurate value or score on these things; so RPGA Tournaments have NO SCORING SYSTEM.

So how do you tell who are the winners? YOU VOTE.

It works like this. After each round of play, the players fill out evaluation forms. They give their opinions on the quality of the scenario, the Dungeon Master, and the system itself. They have the opportunity to give their suggestions where they will be heard. Then they vote for the best players in the group, keeping the three prime considerations (given above) in mind.

The Dungeon Master also fills out an evaluation form, giving his or her opinions, and then naming the players displaying the best leadership, knowledge of rules, play of alignment, and the highest quality of role playing overall. The Dungeon Master also votes for the best players, just like one of them.

The evaluation forms that the players and DMs fill out are put aside until after the Tournament, when the dust clears. During the weeks after, the RPGA staff analyzes the information, and uses it for designing new Tournament scenarios, rating the Dungeon Masters, and keeping in touch with the members. In this way, YOUR opinions are heard; you really do make a difference.

Originally, the DM tallied the votes and announced the best players, who would proceed to the next round. This has been slightly revised; the names will be announced by posting them, rather than (sometimes embarrassingly) announcing them on the spot.

After the first round of play, all the players progressing are thoroughly scrambled; new teams are assigned, and ideally (not counting alternates or substitutes for players who don't show up), each player is then faced with an entirely new group of competitors, as well as a new DM. The same procedure is used for each subsequent round.

In this system, the best players end up in the finals; they have proved themselves anew each round. The tough part, for the Dungeon Masters and the Tournament Director, is after the final. Each of the final round DMs argues for his or her best player, giving examples of outstanding play and comparing the player against the "perfect" job of playing the character. (Of course, nobody ever does everything perfect.) The Director listens to the discussion, grilling the DMs for details and opinions, and then makes the final choice of Best Player in the Tournament. The other "best players" (from each team) are listed in order, for future awards of International Scoring Points (more about that later).

Sound good so far? Well, hang on; there are some nice side effects. For one thing, since there's no scoring and the best players WILL progress, regardless of how far through the adventure the group gets, the game is very relaxed (low-key was the term used). The players concentrate on their quality of role playing, and are not rushing to complete encounters, accumulate treasure, or whatever. The Dungeon Masters enjoy it too; it doesn't matter whether a DM is slower, faster, better, or worse than another; the players are not penalized or helped by the DM's quality. However, from the evaluations, the worst DMs are weeded out, and the best are used in the final round — where their opinions are critically important. The scenario designer has an easy job of it, too; instead of being forced to come up with an adventure that can be scored (a really tough job, if you think about it), the possibilities open up to just about anything. The modules we have used were designed for maximum entertainment more than anything else.

The RPGA network is a private club of the most serious role playing gamers. We have plenty of Dungeon Masters at most major conventions, and a limited number of players; so team size has been kept down to 5 or 6. Everyone gets the chance to show what can be done with the characters; this disappoints those who have been counting on riding along with a team, but helps the best players by allowing them to prove it, individually.

This may not last as long as we'd like; RPGA Membership is growing fast. But every effort will be made to keep the team size near the optimum (5 players, in our opinion).

The flaw we found in the system is this: players may vote on a popularity/unpopularity contest, rather than keeping the role playing aspects in mind. But so far, most of the players have accepted the responsibility, and have taken the matter as seriously as we have. Some players don't even vote for themselves, if they felt that they didn't do a good job! That's real honesty showing, and we applaud it. However, we have found a way to help prevent popularity contests; the DMs will have more votes. The DMs who have shown themselves to be good, according to the evaluations of their players (plus the Tournament Directors' opinions), will be treated as if 2, 3, 4, or even 5 players' worth of votes, based on their overall rating. A proven top-quality DM will have as many votes as the entire party. DMs without RPGA track records will have 1 set of votes, the same as one member of the party.

The system for International Scoring Points, to determine the best players in the world, is still being worked on. Although we've had two Tournaments with a total of about 200 players, such a system needs lots of information to work; we will announce totals in August of 1982. By that time, many RPGA members will have played in at least one RPGA Tournament (and many in two or three), and a reasonably accurate rating system will be possible. Basically, though, the bigger the Tournament, the more points the winners will get. Every player who makes it into a final round will get SOME points. We're working on a way to keep an average player from being listed as tops, just because he or she manages to go to all the Tournaments; the scoring system should reflect true ability, not just frequency.

That's the system, including the original concepts and the changes made from experience. It seems to work well; the games are very similar to, and in many cases much better than, the AD&D games you play at home. Some of the best role playing we've ever seen has taken place at the two RPGA Tournaments held so far; watch for more and better games in the RPGA AD&D Tournaments at all the GEN CON conventions in the coming year. And if you have comments about the system, or see some flaws that we don't — write to RPGA HQ! Communicate! This is YOUR Association, and YOUR Tournament system.